## REMARKS

Claim 17-27 are pending in this application. Claims 1-16 and 28-39 have been canceled.

Claims 17-27 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a) as allegedly being obvious over *Paske* (US 6,231,525) in view of *Martin et al* (US 5,340,067) or *Willems et al* (US Pub No. 20040103745). Applicant respectfully traverses.

*Paske* discloses a device and method for measuring hand and wrist damage. Measuring hand and wrist damage requires an accurate measurement of the gripping force applied by a hand. Important to the disclosure of *Paske*, gripping force projections are triangulated. *Paske*, col. 4, lines 32-34. Triangulated force projections are normal to the fixture surface and meet at a single point, shown as point 22 in Figure 1. *Id.*, col. 6, 15-33.

*Martin* and *Willems* both disclose ways to reduce the force required to grip or move a surface. Both disclose reducing the force required to grip or move a surface by increasing the roughness of the surface. *Martin*, col. 4, lines 20-25 (increasing roughness reduces force required to grip a mouse); *Willems*, 6 (increasing roughness reduces force required to turn a wheelchair wheel).

The Examiner asserts that the invention is obvious because one skilled in the art would combine *Paske* with *Martin* or *Willems* to arrive at Applicant's invention. Contrary to the Examiner's assertion, one skilled in the art would not combine the references for at least three reasons. First, the references address completely different issues. *Paske*, on the one hand, teaches accurately measuring applied force. *Paske* does not address increasing or decreasing the amount of applied force. *Martin* and *Willems*, on the other hand, teach ways of reducing over-all force by more efficiently applying side force. *Martin* and *Willems* are silent on measuring the force. Accordingly, there is no reason that one skilled in the art measuring force according to *Paske* would have any interest in trying to *reduce* over-all force. Indeed, one skilled in the art practicing *Paske* would be interested in accurately measuring the amount of applied force, not manipulating the amount of applied force.

Second, there is no benefit to combining the references. *Paske* teaches a fixture (18) that is shaped so that forces applied from a natural gripping motion are normal to the surface. *Paske*, col. 6, lines 5-15. *Martin* and *Willems* address the problem of minimizing over-all force required to generate a given amount of side force. *Willems* addresses the force used to roll a wheel chair. Force is applied to the pushrim, tangential to the surface of the pushrim. In this case, excess force is needed to grip the pushrim. *Willems* addresses the excess force used to grip the pushrim by increasing the pushrim friction. *Willems*, Abstract. Increasing pushrim friction results in less force being required to grip the pushrim. *Martin* addresses the same problem with respect to a computer mouse. The mouse is made with a rough surface. The rough surface increases the friction between the mouse and the user's hand. The increased friction "results in a reduction in the force required in the hand in performing the task of controlling the mouse." *Martin*, col. 4, lines 20-25. Thus, both *Martin* and *Willems* teach ways of reducing the amount of force required to produce a given amount of side force. One skilled in the art would not combine the references because fixture (18) of *Paske* is shaped to eliminate side loads, whereas *Martin* and *Willems* address ways to more efficiently apply side loads. Without side loads, there is no reason to look to references that teach ways to efficiently apply side loads.

Third, combining the references would defeat the purpose of *Paske*. In *Paske*, fixture (18) is specially designed to direct gripping force projections to point 22. In doing so, side forces are generally eliminated. *Martin* and *Willems* disclose ways to more efficiently apply side forces. Being able to more efficiently apply side forces would result in side forces being applied to fixture (18). The side forces would change the force projections, and necessarily upset the force triangulation. Indeed, with side loads, force projections would not meet at point 22. Thus, combining *Paske* with *Martin* and *Willems* would defeat one of the primary objectives of *Paske*: directing force projections to a single point.

Further, even if one skilled in the art combined the reference, the combination does not teach Applicant's invention. As the Examiner acknowledges, *Paske* does not disclose slick contact points. September 7, Office Action, 5. *Martin* and *Willems* do not supply the missing element. They disclose high friction surfaces. The Examiner appears to reason that one skilled in the art would combine *Paske* with the opposite of *Martin* or *Willems*. However, the Examiner has not provided any basis for this assertion. Indeed, it is only after

reviewing Applicant's invention that the advantages of a slick surface for diagnosing hand and wrist injuries becomes apparent.

Applicant recognized the advantages of using slick surfaces to measure force. The slick surfaces allow the forces to be accurately measured without a specially shaped fixture. Because the slick surfaces substantially eliminate the side loads, there is no need to trigonometrically resolve side loads.

In view of the above, applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

Applicant believes no fee is due with this response. However, if a fee is due, please charge our Deposit Account No. 06-2375, under Order No. HO-P02511US1 from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

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Respectfully submitted,

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